

To my fellow Australians

We, the women that are currently being held captive in al Hol camp, Hasake Syria are displaced, lost felt homeless for years we yearn for our hometown. We need your help and we need it now! Our children are struggling our elderly are suffering and the health of the pregnant women is rapidly deteriorating, we the mothers who bare the weight of these stressful conditions are broken. Being held captive has taken its toll, we yearn for a safe sleeping place, medical access, a place where our voice is heard where we actually matter. A place were we are not treated as a war trophy

As you may not be aware that Al-Hol camps capacity is made to house 20,000 and is currently holding 70,000 people. This has made us unable to have access to basic rights such as;

Access to running water:

Water tanks should be filled by mobile water tankers although the supply never meets the demand. we are constantly left with no water days on end, the taps on the tanks are almost always stolen or broken. when the tanks are filled, lining up in the hot summers sun is unbearable as children are constantly under attack by others claiming that tanks belong to "them", The tank is emptied as soon as its filled and after all the pushing and shoving you most likely come home empty handed. Most of us are unable to hold the 10L gallon so basic necessities like washing clothes, dishes and showers are all limited.

Shelter

Our tents are not waterproof, we suffered alot throughout the storms, hail and rain in the past months. now we face a new battle. The heat, the scorching summer sun hot winds and sand storms make unbearable living conditions. our elderly, heavily pregnant women and children are badly affected by this. Extreme sunburns, asthma attacks and heat strokes are the things we are facing daily. You may think that there is an easy solution such as not allowing the kids outside, the tents is our kitchen toilet and bedroom in a space of app. 3x3 so its almost impossible or cooling of by having a cold drink or sitting in front of a fan but we actually don't have access to electricity.

Syrian summers in al Hasake desert bring out some unfriendly critters, snakes, scorpions, bees, wasps, biting beetles and disease carrying flies and mosquitos are the dangers were facing this season. due to the size of the camp the soldier access point closest to us is 15min walk meaning if one of us is bitten by these venomous creatures the walk to the gate could be deadly. We have no where to hide when there dust storms comes about, triggering asthma attacks and blinding us from one metre in front of you, hiding in your by closing the zippers in this heat cannot be done.

Access to food

Basic grains are distributed by the UN but due to a over demand receiving anything is a dream come true. requesting support involves hours of standing in a crowd pushing and shoving to request from the guards to leave. if they allow you going to the admin office, chances of them having anything to give you is a gamble, if its your lucky day you'll be walking home with your boxes for 30min till you reach home. The task is a living hell for our young ones in these summer temperatures. Also food safety is nonexistent as there is no electricity. Things such as cheese and milk are unsafe and chicken is so dangerous it could possibly be your last meal.

Medical, Mental Health and Wellbeing issues

Access to medical services is limited due to the size of the camp, getting a medical consultation is extremely difficult as you would need to walk holding your child as you drag along the remaining children to a far destination waiting hours on end in hopes to be seen by snobby under-qualified medical staff.

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Along is exposing them to a bunch of worldwide diseases. the end result of this tip is usually a exhausted, tearful mother with no proper solution for her sick child. As almost always the medicine prescribed is only available in adult tabs causing you to crush up tablets in hopes to provide your child with the correct dosage. These services usually close at 3pm leaving us with no other alternative medical access.

Accessing emergency medical assistance involves walking 15min to the guards who block their ears and brushes us off due to a over demand of needs and language barriers.

Our adults and children have medical needs that we do not have access to such as children's dental and mental health services amongst us are women and children with permanent optical needs who's glasses are broken and scratched causing headaches. dental issues we face are broken teeth visible cavities and infected gums resulting in excruciating pain. My 5 year old daughter has two large visible cavities which affects her diet and keeps her up at night. More importantly are the injured amongst us a 6YO girl with a bullet wound to the neck, this child was sent in for an X-Ray (against medical advice of an MRI) to determine nerve damage. The under-qualified "doctor" diagnosed her earring as the bullet trapped in her body, the mother desperately tried to explain her daughters situation but it fell on deaf ears. As you may be aware nerve damage is repairable within a limited time frame. This family was advised by doctors to give up and access medical treatment in their country (Australia). In addition there are women with untreated shrapnel wounds, the time frame of treatment is running out and now face permanent nerve damage, paralysation and even the amputation of limbs.

Precamp life has already taken a major toll on our physical and mental well being. The adults and children have suffered from malnutrition for over a year as we were cut off of basic necessities such as clean drinking water, fruits, vegetables and dairy (eggs, milk, yoghurt). this has taken a major toll on our overall health. our children are facing major health issues, severe vitamin deficiency, rickets, bow legs, developmental delays and broken teeth. The sounds and pressure of bombs has resulted in hearing problems which if left untreated will have a detrimental effect to their ability to learn in the future.

Our number one priority as any parent is our children. attending to their mental well being is crucial. our children have lived in unstable environments for years, suffered the loss of many loved ones. Their fathers death having the heaviest impact symptoms of PTSD are clearly apparent in their day to day behaviour. They show severe anxiety when soldiers approach us, they are soaked in fear of the possibility of soldiers whipping us with their belts, electrocuting with their tasers and shooting or hitting us with their guns as these are events they have witnessed far too many times in this camp, physical abuse, being stripped of clothing, being pelted with rocks, having chunks of hair pulled out are all reoccurring events that has been extremely difficult to explain to our children leaving them confused as to who is meant to protect us. the youngest reacting by screaming, having uncontrollable tantrums and other children falling to the ground with seizures caused by fear (of soldiers). when my 5year old sees a man with a gun immediately stops her play and runs towards our tent in a panic of fear of being next. she screams at me to hide our food, the little money we have even fearing that her hair ties might be stolen. Resulting in her having a nervous breakdown as i try to reassure her that we will be out of this place soon. My 3year old boy suffers from speech

delays but his tantrums can be quite epic. I've tried to deal with them using many techniques but have been unsuccessful. He used to be fully toilet trained, due to the situation we are in now he is now back into nappies full time. The longer it takes for me to bring my children home to the worse it will be. We want stability and family the longer it will take for us all to heal. i want them to successfully integrate into society and make the most of an education. i wish for them to have a calm, settled, stable family and makeup on lost time.

Health Hazards

kerosene cook tops are extremely dangerous, they are the main cause of tents being set alight. our tents are made of extremely flammable materials, this mixed with strong winds make breakfast lunch and dinner a constant gamble as it might be your last.

Public toilets are a misery, They are scarce and feral, filled to the rims with feaces surrounded by blood filled tissues, dirty sanitary pads and overflowing baby nappies. they are infested with bacteria carrying flies that enter our tents and then land on our food. There are no facilities to dispose of rubbish appropriately this becomes an extreme safety hazard. toilet cubicles are far from the tents, lurking around them are strange people who have been attacking children. Little boys and girls have been raped and found dead in the past, resulting in us having to put buckets in our tents as toilet where we cook and sleep allowing us and our children who are constantly suffering diarrhoea to use the toilet

Other issues we face are the savage beating of children from other displaced children, a horror we face daily. They use rocks as a weapon, no one is safe. Bloody, bruised and beaten all of our children have fallen victim from my youngest one year old little girl to my five year old daughter.

Lack of resources

we dread passing the time. Imagine having no access to electrical devices and no literature. we crave knowledge, something to distract us, ease our hearts. we reminisce in our social gatherings about public school and its resources book club and nancy drew, how much we long for crayola crayons, colouring books and phonic cards. The toys available to our children are the toys that have been rejected by australian safety standards not something you could compare to fisher n price. the only thing our kids are learning is how to throw rocks, a horrendous habit.

The Extremists Threat

The Australian community is quite prominent here as we are recognised as permissible to kill as we do not share in their beliefs (yes we are considered disbelievers here). They have an organised mafia who execute targeted attacks on women who fit the criteria. on numerous occasions we have been warned that were next. these women burn down tents filled with women and children in their sleep, steal money and gold even decapitated women and children. in the past weeks there have been numerous attacks resorting in us asking the soldiers for help to up security only to be told to 'sort it out ourselves' for over a month we have had to guard our tents by staying up all night. Emotionally and physically exhausted we long for a full nights sleep free from the soldiers invasive raids, venomous bugs and the awakening to children and womens screams that have awoken from nightmares.

Its time to come home, we look forward to a peaceful night sleep, a night that you dare to look up to the night sky without the sounds of missiles and planes. we are emotionally destroyed, my heart is in despair in agony. i try to explain my heartache as my heart being clenched, pinched, twisted and

yanked down by gravity taking over my insides so far down i find it difficult to stand I'm feeling numb although the only sensation i feel is pain. i look at my broken life and my children and i feel anger at the reasons why they have been put in these situations i will never forgive or forget. its not there fault although they're paying the highest price.

i know the Australian would respond with open arms if only they know. They would never accept his for the children elderly and pregnant women. they would get us home asap before someone gets hurt poisoned by a scorpion and left untreated or killed by a bunch of thugs. Other countries have successfully taken home there citizens by using international aid agency's to safely transfer them to the closest embassy. Countries such as France, Russia, kazakhasatan, Kosovo, Spain, Ireland, Holland, America, Canada, Lebanon and Denmark have lead the way in returning their people home successfully.

In additional the ground situation is unstable with the Syrian civilians warning us daily about Syrian forces quietly preparing ground attacks and hijacking the roads to besiege the open trade routes (leaving us without water for days) we pray the world doesn't turn a blind eye as we on the ground are being told by guards they plan to illegally send us to Iraq or let is be sold as sex slaves to Iran. The world is aware of the illegal torture. I ask of you all to appreciate the dire situation we face i know our country is of the most fair humane civil and forbearing country on earth. they will never except this for their children as this is torture for them. i Urge you to look around for the basic rights you take for granted and know they are appreciated. we need time to move on from our broken past and want to pick up the pieces to form a new future. we can not do this any longer we call on you just to make a phone call as you heat up your car on the way to work or as your barister makes you a double shot espresso or on your lunch break waiting in line for a sandwich contact the local federal mp office and let them know there are broken women and children that deserve safety. give a voice to the voiceless and a help to the helpless. I'm an australian - get me out of here.